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**THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2013**

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# INPORT NEWS

SERVING PORT COLBORNE • WAINFLEET • SHERKSTON • LOWBANKS • ISSUE NO. 9 VOLUME 17

For news updated daily see [www.inportnews.ca](http://www.inportnews.ca)

### ■ GREEN ENERGY ACT:

## Rural municipalities unite against turbines

ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — About 50 representatives from small towns across Ontario gathered in Wainfleet last Friday to discuss what they view as a common problem — wind turbines.

As more than 100 people concerned about the development of wind turbine projects in their communities showed their support, elected officials and municipal staff from 20 rural municipalities spent the day at Jericho House on Rathfon Rd. to hear from experts on the issue.

Discussion was related

to putting forth unified plans to regain some control over Green Energy Act projects.

Wainfleet Mayor April Jeffs said just bringing the representatives of rural communities together was an achievement in itself.

"It's amazing," she said. Ron Shenk, a councillor from Plympton-Wyoming, a town of about 8,000 people near Samia, said the conference marked "the beginning of co-operation among rural municipalities."

"We're coming together with one voice."

see WIND | page 2



Supplied photo

More than 100 residents of rural communities across the province gathered in Wainfleet Friday to show their support as their elected municipal representatives discussed ways to regulate wind turbines, permitted under the Green Energy Act.

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# upfront

■ **POLITICS:** Former astronaut visits Vale centre

## Liberal astronaut lands in Port Colborne

**ALLAN BENNER**  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — Marc Garneau discussed his plans for creating jobs and a strong economy when he landed in Port Colborne last week.

The federal Liberal leadership candidate — also Canada's first astronaut — visited Vale Health and Wellness Centre to discuss with about 30 party faithful his hopes for the future.

Peter Opdam, president of the Welland Federal Liberal Riding Association, said Garneau was sensitive to the impact the recent recession has had on this riding.

"He realizes that this is one of the most hard-hit areas in the country when it comes to jobs and manufacturing losses," Opdam said. "He really stressed that as leader, and hopefully prime minister, he would work on the economy as his No. 1 priority."

Garneau earlier announced his plans for rebuilding the economy. They include providing incentives for Canadian entrepreneurs, such as removing capital gains taxes on new business startups; cutting payroll taxes for small- and medium-sized businesses that provide employee training; and he plans to provide incentives to hire young Canadians in an effort to resolve an unacceptable high youth unemployment rate.

ment rate.

Liberal party communications consultant Jordan Owens said Garneau "got particularly fired up" when discussing the government's treatment of veterans — a topic that falls close to the heart of the retired Navy captain, whose father and grandfather were both veterans.

She recalled Garneau saying the government needs to providing medical and psychological treatment and skills training to help veterans reintegrate into society. Owens used Twitter to relay some of Garneau's comments during his visit to the Vale centre.

"We can never do too much for our veterans, who have put their lives on the line for us," she wrote, quoting Garneau.

She said Garneau also called for reducing the size of the Prime Minister's Office, as well as changes to government policies regarding First Nations people.

"We've got to get rid of the Indian Act. It is outdated and paternalistic," Garneau said.

Opdam said Garneau also visited students at Niagara College while in the region, where he shared his ideas to address the increasing cost of post-secondary education. Garneau's planned education loan reforms would mean no student would be denied access to post-secondary education because of their family's income, and no student would have to



Joe CSEH Tribune Photo  
Federal Liberal Party leadership candidate Marc Garneau is pictured at a meet and greet at Vale Health and Wellness Centre on Wednesday in Port Colborne. Pictured from left are Paul Grenier, Garneau, Welland Federal Liberal Association president Peter Opdam and Niagara West-Glanbrook Federal Liberal Electoral District Association treasurer Dennis Newsome.

pay back their student loans until they're earning enough money to do so.

Garneau's visit follows on the heels of another Liberal leadership front-runner

— Justin Trudeau, who visited Welland in the midst of a February snowstorm.

Water is charging million-dollar development fees for wind turbine projects.

■ **WIND**

## Municipalities need similar restrictions, councillor says

FROM PAGE 1

Like Wainfleet, Plympton-Wyoming has also implemented a two-kilometre setback for wind turbine developments, contravening the Green Energy Act.

"When the provincial

government takes away your planning rights, what's next?" said Shenk.

Although Wainfleet and Plympton-Wyoming both face lawsuits from developers for establishing a two-km setback, Central Huron Coun. Alex Westerhout said a big state-

ment could be made if all 91 municipalities affected by the Green Energy Act passed similar planning restrictions.

"We need to convince our colleagues from urban centres that what is happening in rural centres is wrong," said Joann Chechak, a

town councillor from West Lincoln. "The Municipal Act said we have rights. The Green Energy Act took it all away."

Wainfleet Ald. Betty Kone said many "innovative ideas" were discussed amongst conference participants.

One of those ideas was to establish a committee with representation from rural municipalities across Ontario, to "take on the issue and speak with the powers that be."

Jefferies said other municipalities are taking action in different ways. For

instance, the Town of Blue Water is charging million-dollar development fees for wind turbine projects.

"We do have a lot of support, and I've been told by other municipal councillors in the past that we're not alone. We have to remember that."

# portraits

■ **HELPING GREEN ELFS:** Port Colborne family creates website to help people in need

## Teaching Hunter – and Niagara – to share

ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — Lisa Green was looking for a way to teach her son Hunter the importance of sharing.

It wasn't an easy lesson to impart to the four-year-old autistic boy.

Green says children with autism often have difficulty socializing with other children, as well as difficulty learning to share.

But Green not only taught Hunter to share, she started a new organization to help the rest of the community share, too.



If you don't need it, go to the Salvation Army, go to St. Vincent de Paul, go to Goodwill because these places do so much good for the community every day."

Lisa Green

late last year, Green and her husband Geoff started a program called The Helping Green ELFS (Ever Loving Family Support).

Its website helpinggreenelbs.webs.com is where people can either register for help, or find out more about families that need help.

It includes anonymous information about families in need, including the ages of children, the size clothes they wear, as well as their interests and why they need the help.

"You get to see the city they're from, because we do the entire Niagara region," she said.

Green matches up people with items to donate with families that need help.

She started the program about a month and a half



The Green family: from left, Geoff; Hunter, 4; Syler, 1; and Lisa. The Port Colborne family has started an initiative to distribute used toys and other items to families that need them.

ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo

before last Christmas, and in that time was able to help 78 families and more than 200 children in the process.

About 50 families have already registered for Easter. They include single parents, families, people living on disability pensions. Many of those families have already been "adopted" by people who are able to help.

"At Christmas, we had people saying they were in tears, it was such a beautiful experience. I got so many e-mails like that. It was just awesome."

Green says she got the idea for the project while cleaning

up toys left behind by Hunter and his one-year-old brother, Syler.

She says it's amazing just how much stuff Hunter has that could benefit others. It wasn't easy, but she eventually convinced Hunter that other little boys might like to play with some of the toys he doesn't use anymore.

It's still hard for Hunter, "but he's getting really good with it," she says.

Hunter helped wrap gifts at Christmas, and he's already been helping his mother prepare baskets for Easter, she adds.

By focusing on gently-used

items, she said the effort also has a "green" initiative—providing a new home to items that might otherwise end up in landfill sites.

"There's just so much stuff that people have," she says. "The kids might have outgrown it, or they don't use it anymore."

And giving those items to a family in need, she says, is far better than throwing them away.

"If you don't need it, go to Salvation Army, go to St. Vincent de Paul, go to Goodwill, because these places do so much good for the community every day."

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In addition to donating of unwanted items, people are encouraged to share creative homemade items and baked goods.

Green says people can participate by calling her at 905-834-9354 or by going through Facebook.

In addition to the work she does with the Helping Green ELFS program, Green worked with volunteers prior to Christmas and put together a collection of used toys. She says the idea was to allow children to buy Christmas gifts for their siblings using canned food as currency.

As a result of that event, she

says 293 kilograms of non-perishable food was generated for Port Cares.

"That turned out to be awesome," she said. "We're hoping to do that this year, too."

Green's family has only lived in Port Colborne for a short while, but wasted little time before they started working to make a difference in the community they now call home.

"It's nice in a smaller town," the former St. Catharines resident says. "You can get involved."

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# INPORT NEWS

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## ■ ourview

### Efforts needed to ease interchange concerns

A new highway interchange that could potentially attract or discharge traffic into a residential neighbourhood and past two elementary schools is not likely to find favor with the affected local residents.

So, it was not surprising there was some negative blowback last week to Niagara Region's preferred option for a new Highway 406 interchange that would serve the new St. Catharines hospital and projected future development along Fourth Ave.

The \$30-million plan is to use the existing Third Ave. bridge over the 406 as the focal point of the new interchange, and build a new service road on the west side of the highway that would lead directly to the hospital on Fourth Ave.

However, some angst was expressed by residents at a public meeting last week that motorists may choose to go east on Third Ave. to First St. to access the hospital. This section of First St. is residential and includes Grapevine School and Mother Teresa School.

It's not clear why highway-exiting motorists from north St. Catharines or other parts of Niagara would select First St. as their preferred path to the hospital or the surrounding developments.

While the two routes may be more or less equal in length, First St. would likely be clogged with other traffic and has various traffic calming measures. In contrast, the service road would be free of traffic signals and stop signs, and only carry traffic heading to and from the hospital or adjacent commercial operations.

Plus, signs on the highway and at the Third Ave. exits would presumably be directing motorists to the new service road. Given the projected increases in traffic volumes in this area, the Region's public works staff is adamant that a new highway interchange is needed. Otherwise, serious gridlock could occur on the main route to a hospital.

The preferred option, the key element of which is the new service road, is seen as making the best of a bad situation.

That said, residents' concerns about off-loading of traffic onto First St. shouldn't be ignored. Regional staff need to address signage issues and perhaps recommend further traffic-calming measures on First St. to ensure motorists exiting off the highway do not regard the residential street as a favourable or even reasonable means to get to Fourth Ave.

—Doug Herold

## ■ COLUMN

# Religious view of the world

GARY TOMIUCK

For the employed, work comprises more than one third of their day at least five days a week. When talking to young middle aged or older people before long they will say to you or you will say to them "where do you work?" It has been said that people borrow money they don't have to impress people they don't like to buy things they don't need. How many people do you know of who clap their hands together and say "Thank God it's Monday."

Work is not a curse, it was designed by God to bless us in many different ways. The only difference is that work is more difficult now, it may be more frustrating and more unfulfilling from God's original intent and design for us.

God took Adam and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and to cultivate it. What's that called — work.

Before the fall why was Adam commanded to work?

1. Work gave him dignity as a work was made in God's image.

2. It was service unto God. It was not strenuous labour at this point, it was done in joy unto God.

3. It was also a form of production. Tilling the garden led to the production of fruit and vegetables—food that was good to eat.

4. Work fostered a sense of achievement and deep satisfaction.

As Adam toiled with the gifts that God had given him, the end result would have been a profound sense of

accomplishment.

We all know that experience upon the completion of a job well done.

How does that flesh out in your job today? Does your job give you a sense of dignity? You say "I work on an assembly line — talk about repetitive work the same thing day after day after day."

Where is the dignity in that? What can you do if you are stuck in a monotonous, boring and mundane job? Look elsewhere but in the meantime try to be content where you are.

What did the Apostle Paul say under extremely difficult circumstances? "I have learned to be content in all things." It is a learning process. Do you see your work as service unto God? If you are a Christian every facet of your life falls under the Lordship of Christ. Do you work in the right spirit and in the Name of God? He is your real Boss. He is your ultimate employer.

Answering these questions will change your whole perspective—your whole approach when you are in a dead-end job that seems to be going nowhere. There is to be no sacred/secular distinction. We cannot compartmentalize our lives by saying "the church is sacred but my job isn't". You can be an ordained plumber you might see that finished product in your minds eye as the fruit of your labour. Or our work might be part of the process of some merchandise that is completed later in a different factory.

Be it tools, clothes, items for homes, machine parts etc etc. Work fosters a sense of achievement and deep

satisfaction. When you work hard you don't feel guilty about taking your cheque. If you don't work hard then you should feel guilty about taking a paycheck.

God worked hard and He is still working. When He created the Heavens and the Earth that was Work! And He experienced a sense of deep satisfaction and said "It was Good."

Just before Jesus went to the cross, He said to His Heavenly Father "I have finished the work you gave me to do" (Jn 17:4).

If you are young and healthy you must work. It is God's commandment. The lazy, the slothful, and the sluggards must take this to heart. Then after work is rest. We owe our Lord to get tired. We have the weekends usually to do just that. This is a commandment that workaholics need to take to heart.

Leisure can be activities, reading, listening to music, sports, hobbies or crafts or anything else that helps you to relax and unwind. And after a busy week you can be recharged, renewed, and refuelled to enter the battle once again with fresh zeal.

Even Jesus needed to rest and get away from the demanding crowds. To pray to His Father and to be alone. The Bible says in Exodus 20 vs 9 and 10, "for six days you shall work but the seventh is the Sabbath to the Lord and you shall rest."

Gary Tomiuck is the interim pastor of the *Wainfleet Christian Congregational Church*.

## ■ COLUMN

### Canadians, winter vacations not good partners

As you know — or would know if you ever bothered to invite me to lunch — I've been inundated with letters from readers seeking advice about winter vacations.

Despite what you may think, these curious readers aren't asking questions about whether I think Mexico is safe (yes, but wear a helmet), or whether I recommend getting anti-hepatitis shots (absolutely) or how frequently one should get anti-hepatitis shots (three times a day for the rest of your life, but always wait 30 minutes before swimming).

Instead, these winter-wary folks



Ian Gillespie  
LIGHTER SIDE

— folks who, like me and maybe you, aren't going anywhere exotic this winter — are wondering how they should react when their friends, acquaintances and co-workers return from some sun-drenched stay in some southern paradise and regale them with tales of their fantastic holiday.

First, it's important to acknowledge that

this is a sensitive situation and you should resist the temptation to bop the smiling, sun-kissed son-of-a-gun in the nose.

It's hard, I know.

Like me, there are thousands (maybe even dozens) of Canadians who aren't going away this winter.

This may be because they can't afford it, or because they can't get the time off work, or because they're serving 15 years in a maximum-security facility for a crime they didn't commit.

But whatever the reason, many Canadians haven't seen the sun for more than six minutes in the past three months.

see GILLESPIE | page 5

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■ GILLESPIE

# I tend to be SAD every day of the year

FROM PAGE 4

Because of this they're suffering from seasonal affective disorder (SAD), which is sometimes referred to as "winter depression" or "winter blues" or, in my house, "reality." People afflicted with SAD often suffer from anxiety, irritability, a tendency to oversleep and a craving for carbohydrates — symptoms I tend to display every day of the year, even when I'm in a particularly chipper mood.

But these troubling symptoms are even worse when the sufferer — someone, for example, whose most recent "vacation" was a trip to the basement for a bottle of beer — comes face to face with a friend eager to tell

them all about parasailing in Costa Rica, snorkeling in Fiji or bungee-jumping in Buenos Aires.

First, you should realize that if your so-called "friend" was truly a friend, they would've invited you along on their vacation.

So don't worry about insulting them, because their very presence — everything from their goofy smile to the grains of sand still lodged in parts of their body you have no business even thinking about — is an insult to your steadfast northern values.

The way I see it, if God had wanted Canadians to experience sun and sand during the long, dark days of winter, He would have made flights to the Caribbean

cheaper than a box of Timbits.

Sadly, that's not the way it is.

Instead, average Canadians are forced to endure the anecdotes of their more fortunate friends and family members who insist on describing in depressing detail how they sipped on a pina colada while a charming Jamaican braided their hair on the beach in Ocho Rios.

If it comes to that, just bob them in the nose.

lan.gillespie@sunmedia.ca

■ COLUMN

## Canada's new religious freedom office should have a chance to work

On its surface, the move last week by Prime Minister Stephen Harper to create an Office of Religious Freedom may seem like little more than the fulfillment of an old election promise, wrapped in hoary, outdated notions of the importance of religion in the modern world.

Indeed, Tuesday's announcement at the Alhamdulillah Muslim community centre in Vaughan has been met by everything from rolled eyebrows to whispered ridicule to outright contempt.

Many of Harper's critics have suggested the move was merely a sop to the government's conservative Christian support base, whose



LARRY CORNIES

OPINION

adherents have already seen a number of their pet projects — expressions of faith in schools and the public square, marriage as the preserve of heterosexual couples, prayer in legislative councils and chambers, for example — disappear into the sands of modernity and the decisions of what they claim are "activist" judges and their courts.

The usefulness of such an office and its potential impact, both

abroad and at home, however, shouldn't be dismissed so easily. In appointing Andrew Bennett, dean of Augustine College, a liberal arts college in Ottawa, as the office's first ambassador, Harper emphasized the religious inclusivity of the office.

"Dr. Bennett is a man of principle and deep convictions and he will encourage the protection of religious minorities around the world so all can practise their faith without fear of violence and repression," Harper said, underlining the importance of seeing greater religious freedoms as a tool for the strengthening of democracy.

see CORNIES | page 6

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# In The NEWS

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Steve Kelleher,  
President and CEO  
Hyundai Auto Canada Corp.

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## ■ CORNIES

# Worship attendance dropping in Canada

FROM PAGE 5

That kind of broad view of faith and its free expression is at considerable odds with the priorities of evangelical and fundamentalist elements of conservative Christianity, whose preferences would clearly be to convert and proselytize those of other faiths, not work to allow greater liberty for their free expression.

For conservative Christians, eternal truth is found exclusively within their Scriptures and interpretations, to the exclusion of others.

The mandate of the Office of Religious Freedom, therefore, clearly outstrips the more narrow mission that Christian evangelical and fundamentalist elements might have preferred. In this way, it is not the nod to Christian constituents that Harper's critics suggest.

Second, while attendance at traditional Christian worship services in North America is declining at a rapid rate, with more and more people either swearing off religion altogether or letting it go deeply dormant, such is not the case in the rest of the world.

In Latin America, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, India, Haiti, Sri Lanka, Iran, Afghanistan, Egypt and dozens of other countries, religion still lies at the heart of community and personal life. And over the past several years, intolerance and persecution of minority faiths has taken an upward spike, resulting in wanton killings, the driving of some faith groups deep underground and the destruction of property.

Third, and just as important to Canada's future, is the fact that face of faith at home is rapidly changing.

The country's "religious landscape" is being internationalized and inter-culturalized.

Thirty years ago, the top countries of origin among immigrants to Canada were predominantly Christian countries such as Great Britain, Italy, United States, Germany, Portugal and Netherlands.

Today, they are countries such as China, India, Philippines, Pakistan, South Korea, Romania and Iran.



The office should be given a chance to do its work. After all, that work is as likely to be as instructive to Canadians as it is to those in other parts of the globe."

Alberta sociologist Reginald Bibby has written that "the extent to which we will discard or embrace religion obviously will be influenced by what is happening globally, and how those broader developments impact Canada through immigration. . . Immigration obviously feeds the entire religion-no religion continuum. But, on balance, it appears it will be a particular stimulus to religion in at least the immediate future."

All this is to say nothing of the increased curiosity among Canadians in other spiritual movements, old and new — Gnosticism, Buddhism, Sufi Islam, Kabbalah, New Age philosophies and so on.

Thirty years from now, Canadians will need to be more tolerant and protective of each other's faith traditions, let alone those in other parts of the world.

So what can a mere handful of staff with a modest annual budget of \$5 million accomplish against such an international religious backdrop? And what kind of effect might its ambassador — by all accounts a thoughtful, soft-spoken man equipped with little more than a meagre amount of soft power and moral suasion — likely to have on those in other parts of the world who would kill or torture others because of their faith?

We don't know. But the office should be given a chance to do its work.

After all, that work is as likely to be as instructive to Canadians as it is to those in other parts of the globe.

Larry Cornies is a London, Ont.-based journalist and educator. cornies@gmail.com

■ **SPORTS AND LEISURE:** Port Colborne facility to lure people back

# Vale centre gets glowing reviews

SARAH FERGUSON  
inPort News Staff



**PORT COLBORNE** — Now that Vale Health and Wellness Centre is open, the \$32-million facility is buzzing with action.

Wednesday was the first time Port Colborne resident John Blue visited the centre, to watch his granddaughter skate with her schoolmates.



Blue



Moreau



Wilcox

together to play bocce and my two girls are excited to go swimming and to use the gym."

Junior B Pirates fan Kelly Moreau said Wednesday that she would like to see more Pirates decals in the new ice rink.

"I only see one small Pirates logo on one of the doors but I don't see

**In the winter time it's a long way to travel. Now we won't have to."**

*Karen Wagner on not having to drive to the YMCA in Fort Erie*

anywhere in the arena where it says "Home of the Pirates." I think there should be one."

Moreau said Port Colborne should be proud of its team, as well as the much-needed new facility.

Karen Wagner attended opening festivities Saturday. She said every square inch of the building was filled with people who wanted to catch a glimpse of the building for the first time.

It was crowded and you could feel the energy and the excitement from inside the building all the way outside to the parking lot.

Wagner has been a regular at the YMCA in Fort Erie.

"In the winter time it's a long way to travel," the Port Colborne resident said about driving east to exercise three times a week. "Now

we won't have to."

Judy Cloutier enjoyed the swimming pool for the first time Wednesday. She said it's huge.

She regularly attended crowded aquafit classes at the Fort Erie YMCA with her friend, Wagner. She, too, is glad to have a new Port Colborne facility.

"From what I've seen it's nice and it has a nice setup," she said.

sarah.ferguson@sunmedia.ca

# Agapé Valley

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# Making the grade with Pirates

SARAH FERGUSON  
inPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — What a small group of Lakeshore Catholic students have constructed is a part of Pirates history.

When junior B Pirates owners Tim Toffolo and Ed Weasner approached specialist high skills majors teacher Tino Nuccitelli asking if Lakeshore's students would be interested in designing and installing hockey stalls in the hockey team's dressing room, he leapt at the chance.

"We're glad to be a part of history. This will be here forever," Nuccitelli said about the Pirates' dressing room in the new Vale Health and Wellness Centre.

The high skills major program lets students focus on a career path that matches their individual skills and interests. Each major comprises six to 12 courses in a specific area, such as hospitality and tourism, transportation technology, horticulture and landscaping and construction.

It's not uncommon for students to complete projects in the community to gain "real-world experience," Nuccitelli said.

About 10 students studying manufacturing and construction under the guidance of Nuccitelli, Mike Stevenson and Joe Sciarra, as well as



**We were able to teach the students how to use this new technology and brought it to the project."**

Joe Sciarra

a few art students with the help of art teachers Vanessa Iannantonio and Ewelina Panfara, worked to complete the dressing room that features 25 stalls with hooks and racks to hang skates, hockey sticks and other equipment.

Hanging on the wall is a "Home of the Pirates" sign cut with a CNC router and hand painted, Sciarra said.

"It's exciting because we were able to teach the students how to use this new technology and brought it into the project," Sciarra said about how Pirates sign was designed.

Weasner said he was pleased with how his team's dressing room looks.

"They (Lakeshore students) did an excellent job. All of the kids on the hockey team have said they are more at home in their new dressing room and are proud to be here."

sarah.ferguson@sunmedia.ca



SARAH FERGUSON Staff Photo

Lakeshore Catholic students in the specialist high skills majors and art programs helped construct the dressing room for the junior B Pirates at the Vale Health and Wellness Centre, which opened this past weekend. Pictured from left are Pirates team owner Ed Weasner, Mack Passero, Josh Micallef, Kevin Susin, Alex Campbell, team owner Tim Toffolo and, in back, Sierra Rosania, Bailey Videcar, Taylor Muleboom and Caylea Gates.

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■ **RACE DAY:** 9th Welland hosts annual rally

# Scouts get creative with Kub Kars

ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

WELLAND — There were some very creative designs among the Kub Kars that raced down the track set up at Seaway Mall's centre court. The 9th Welland Scouts were out to the district Kub Kar Rally, pitting their homemade wooden hot rods against competitors from Pelham and Port Colborne, in the hope of representing the district at the regional finals, taking place in Brantford on March 23.

About 50 children participated in the local Kub Kar Rally.

Local scout leaders brought their power tools to Auberge Richelieu a few weeks ago to set up a workshop where the children could create their Kub Kars. As a result, scout Bob Fish said, there were a lot of very interesting cars racing along the track.

Although the scout leaders used the bandsaw to cut out the cars, the children had a chance to use some of the less dangerous power tools such as sanders to give them

hands-on experience.

"With our workshop, they can get as creative as they want," Fish said. "They spend all weekend cutting and designing and painting... If they can draw it on paper and we can cut it out, they can do it."

As long as the cars fall within size and weight restrictions, the children "can do pretty much whatever they want."

Scout leaders set up the workshop last year, too, but the children seemed to be a little more creative this time, said scout leader Jeff Hetherington, who was at the Kub Kar Rally Saturday with his wife Wendy and their nine-year-old son Ian.

see KARTS | page 10



Members of south Niagara scouting groups pit their Kub Kars against each other during a Kub Kar Rally, Saturday, at Seaway Mall.

ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo

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## ■ KARTS

# This year's designs 'wild and crazy'

FROM PAGE 9

"There were some really wild designs this year," he said. "They put a lot of thought into how to lay them out, and they let their own creativity show through in the cars."

"We try to get them to think outside the box," his wife said, adding Ian was very excited about building his own Kub Kar "because Dad let him use more of the power tools this year."

Eight-year-old Spencer Boutin was extremely creative with his car, gluing Lego blocks to the top of it so tiny Lego action figures could go for a ride.

Besides it looking really impressive, Spencer was also impressed with the speed of his car.



ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo  
Eight-year-old Spencer Boutin proudly shows off his Kub Kar.

"I'm in third-place mostly," he said.

Although he wasn't competing, rover Greg White entered his own car into the race. It was equipped with a video camera to give the children a view of what it would be like to be riding on one of the tiny cars.



ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo  
Jacob Stelmashuk, left, front, and Marc Nadon watch as Kub Kars zoom past at the Kub Kar rally Saturday at Seaway Mall.



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## ■ FUNDRAISER

## Soup Fest is later this month

PORT COLBORNE — Port Cares fourth annual Soup Fest, featuring delicious soups, will be held later this month at St. Patrick's Church.

The annual fundraiser will see two seatings for lunch, which will see soups and breads made by Lakeshore Catholic High School's hospitality and tourism program, Niagara College's Canadian food and wine institute, Port Colborne High School's culinary arts program, and Port Cares' food service associate program.

The first seating is from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and the second seating is from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. at the

church, 123 King St., Port Colborne.

Soup Fest takes place Friday, March 22 and tickets are available at Port Cares by calling 905-834-3629. Hurry and get your tickets as seating is limited.



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■ **GLOBAL AID:** Port Colborne group aids Mission of Hope

# Making a difference in Haiti

MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — It was a Mission of Hope.

And, it seems, a successful one at that.

On Jan. 29, a group from Port Colborne embarked on an unforgettable journey to Haiti with the goal of making a difference in people's lives.

Thirty-seven men and women from across Ontario, including 18 from Port Colborne Brethren in Christ Church, travelled overseas to work with Mission of Hope, a Christian organization that works to transform the lives of men, women and children living in the impoverished nation.

During their two-week stay, group members constructed concrete sidewalks, repaired roofs, painted cement out-houses and offered an extra helping hand whenever possible, said pastor Brian Lofthouse.

"We were there to help Mission of Hope help the Haitians," he said. "We helped with whatever they needed us to do."

The Port Colborne team stayed at the Mission of Hope compound, about 11 kilometres from Port-au-Prince.

There, the organization offers schooling daily to 2,400 youths, Lofthouse said.

He was impressed at the magnitude of assistance Mission of Hope offers in the community, including the 60,000 meals it dishes out daily to people in need.

The group had the opportunity to visit with the local school children, as well as those living in the organization's onsite orphanage.

Just as ages ranged greatly on the trip, stretching from 13 to 88, so did experience.

While this was the first time Lofthouse had taken on such a venture, there was another teammate by his side who marked 13 straight years heading to Haiti.

"I believe there are needs in our community, but it's always nice to stretch ourselves out, to go outside of our comfort zone," Lofthouse said.

"That's what I was doing."

He credited pastor Paul Fletcher, of Falls View Brethren in Christ Church, for co-ordinating the trip.

"We have always, as a church, encouraged people to go on missions," Lofthouse said, citing numerous nations where parishioners have gone to offer their assistance.

He hopes to see similar missions continue in the future.

maryanne.firth@summedia.ca  
Twitter: @mfirthTribune



Supplied photo  
A group from Port Colborne Brethren in Christ Church works to paint outhouses during a two-week mission to Haiti to assist through Mission of Hope.

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■ **RYAN'S WELLS:** "He was just a really shy sensitive kid"

# Port native shares her son's story of global change

**ALLAN BENNER**  
InPort News Staff

**WAINFLEET** — Ryan Hreljac was only six years old when inspiration struck him. And he wasted little time

trying to inspire his parents, too.

Susan Hreljac returned to her hometown of Port Colborne last week and shared her son's story with local high school students

during the 2013 Leadership Symposium at Jericho House.

Ryan, who is now 22, returned home from his Grade 1 class at his Kemprville, Ont., elementary school, deeply concerned

that people in some parts of the world are dying because they do not have access to clean drinking water.

"He was just a really shy sensitive kid and this information shocked him," Susan

said.

He was very distraught when he returned home from school that day. He asked his parents for \$70 — enough, he thought, to build a well in a developing country.

"We ignored him," Susan said.

She recalled Ryan scowling and wagging his finger, saying: "Someone just died because they didn't have clean water, and you didn't help."

"That was enough to get her attention."

Eventually, after that initial \$70 estimate grew to about \$2,000, Ryan's first well was dug at Anglo Primary School in Uganda — a school that to this day recognizes July 27 as "Ryan's Day."

That was only the start of a charity that has now grown to now include more than

724 projects in 16 countries all over the world, attracting international attention in the process.

Despite the success of the organization, Susan said her son remains humble. He often tells people he only got Cs and Bs in school, just to emphasize that anyone can accomplish the same things as he.

Although Ryan remains humble about the success of the organization, Susan said the lives of her family have been significantly changed because of the charity work.

It resulted in an addition to their family.

Jimmy Akana, a Ugandan orphan, was a few years older than Ryan, but they became close friends after that well was constructed at Jimmy's school.

see RYAN | page 15

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■ RYAN



ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo

Susan Hreljac talks to students at a leadership symposium while Louis Harris and Shadi Sharififar show how hard it is for families to bring home dirty drinking water.

## Hreljack family opened their home

FROM PAGE 14

In 2003, Jimmy's village was attacked by the Lord's Resistance Army and Jimmy was abducted. He chewed through the ropes that bound his hands and ran to freedom as members of the rebel army shot at him.

With the help of friends, Jimmy managed to escape Uganda and eventually became a Canadian citizen, living with the Hreljac family until he earned a uni-

versity degree. Ryan's parents became his legal guardians.

Ryan could not attend Wednesday's conference. He's too busy at the University of King's College in Halifax where he's in his final year of earning degrees in political science and international development.

More information about the Ryan's Wells charity is available at [www.ryan-swell.ca](http://www.ryan-swell.ca).

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### ■ JERICO HOUSE



ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo

Brother Bill Carrothers and Sister Jacquie Keefe organized Jericho House's third annual leadership symposium for high school students.

## Symposium empowers young leaders

ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

**WAINFLEET** — The young people who spent last week at Jericho House are already leaders, said Sister Jacquie Keefe.

The third annual Leadership Symposium at the ecumenical retreat on Bathurst Rd. was a chance to celebrate their gifts as well as the difference they will make in the future, she said.

Keefe teamed up with Brother Bill Carrothers to co-ordinate the symposium which on Wednesday drew about 45 Grade 10 and 11 students from across Niagara and from Markham and Newmarket schools.

The symposium was intended to help the students further develop their leadership skills so that when they returned to their respective schools they could work harder to make a difference in their communities.

"We're going to centre on passion

and action," Keefe said at the start of the day.

Carrothers said students who participate are particularly interested in social and ecological issues, a focus of the symposium.

Keefe said administrators of Jericho House "really believe in young people." Although they work with adults, she said, Jericho House was intended to be a gathering place for people of all ages.

"And that's why we worked 10 years for this to happen," she said.

[allan.benner@sunmedia.ca](mailto:allan.benner@sunmedia.ca)



### ■ LOTTERY

## Woman a \$50,000 winner

InPort News

recently.

**PORT COLBORNE** — A 93-year-old Port Colborne woman is \$50,000 richer after scratching off a winning Instant Bingo ticket.

Margaret Torok shared some of her plans for the money while claiming her winnings at the OLG Prize Centre,

"I've got lots of grandkids, so it will be nice to help out my family. I'd like to renovate my house as well," Torok said.

She said the ticket, purchased at the Killyla St. Avondale store, produced her first big win.

In its last fiscal year, OLG has handed out \$1.7 billion in prizes.

■ 2014 ELECTION: Wainfleet switches voting method

# Mail to determine council results

DAVE JOHNSON  
InPort News Staff

WAINFLEET — 'Fleeters won't be lining up at polling stations to vote in the 2014 municipal election.

Instead, they'll be mailing in their choices for mayor, aldermen and school trustees.

Wainfleet is switching to a vote-by-mail system that township chief administrative officer Scott Lucy would result in more residents voting.

"Typically the experience is there's an increase in voter turnout with the vote-by-mail system. We're somewhere south of 40% (turnout) and we'd like to get above 50 or 60%."

Lucy said many residents work outside the township and aren't always able to vote on election day. The vote-by-mail system will allow those people

a chance to elect the mayor and aldermen.

Not only will vote-by-mail allow more people a chance to vote, it will also cut down on election expenses, township council heard Tuesday night.

The 2010 municipal election cost Wainfleet taxpayers \$65,575.

The new voting system agreed to by aldermen is expected to cost \$40,814.

One of the biggest drops in cost is staffing and benefits paid to election workers.

"We'll need less people on election night because all they'll have to do is open an envelope," Lucy said. Electronic tabulators will be used to count the votes, meaning results will come in faster than in past elections. He said there were complaints about how slow results came in in 2010.

"Staff have been looking at vote-by-mail for the last couple of elections, but up until now it's not been the best

method for Wainfleet. The security has not been there until now."

Lucy said voting options like using the Internet or telephone voting were ruled out for the township. Not everyone in Wainfleet has the Internet. Telephone voting, Lucy said, is not 100% safe.

Vote-by-mail will see residents given two envelopes and one ballot. They'll

vote for their candidates on that ballot and seal it inside an unmarked envelope. That envelope will go inside one addressed to the township. Residents mail it back, or they can drop it off at township hall anytime between the day nominations close and election day.

Lucy said when the envelope comes back, the person's name will be struck off the voter's list, so there's no duplicate votes, and the other envelope, the one with no markings, is put in a box to be opened on election night.

"The privacy of the vote is assured," he said.

Lucy said there will be one polling station open on election day where people can vote in person.

Lucy said there are secure and fireproof areas inside township hall to lock up the ballots and that only a few election-trained staff will have access to them. With traditional elections, ballots from advance polls are brought in and stored before election night without issue, he added.

Mayor April Jeffs said some residents might not understand the new system and could be confused or intimidated by it.

Replied Lucy: "There is potential to be some problems, but I think those will be outlier cases rather than the norm. The trend in elections is to make voting easier and more accessible in a private and secure way."

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Lucy



Jeffs



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## ■ SAFETY



VICTORIA GRAY Staff Photo

Variations in temperature in the region have made ice on waterways very unstable. Officials are warning people to steer clear.

## Keep off the ice

VICTORIA GRAY  
InPort News Staff

**WELLAND** — Walking on thin ice could land people in big trouble.

Fluctuating temperatures in the Niagara have left ice on waterways dangerously thin.

Fire department officials are warning residents to keep away from rivers, streams and ponds to avoid any life-threatening situations.

Welland fire Chief Denys Prevost said although his department has only dealt with a couple calls concerning people on thin ice, no ice is safe ice.

"The weather has been so variable this winter with its warm spells and cold spells. The ice is not uniform thickness. You can't tell until you're walking on it — but then it's usually too late," he said.

Ed deHaan of Smithville died Sunday night after falling through the ice while snowmobiling near Huntsville and just last week two 14-year-old boys plunged through the ice on the Welland River north of Denistown St.

Pelham fire Chief Bob Lymburner said the most practical advice is to stay away from all Niagara waterways.

"Unless you're trained to recognize the kind of ice you shouldn't be out there. The biggest problem we have is people venturing out who don't look for signs of cracking. They just keep going out there," he said.

"The bottom line is you should never go on the ice — especially in this region."

Port Colborne fire Chief Tom Cartwright

shared similar concerns.

But for people determined to hit the ice to fish, he recommended a call to the Ministry of Natural Resources to learn of ice conditions before taking any risky steps.

The best bet, however, is to just stay off the ice completely, he added.

Wainfleet fire Chief Harry Flagg said many people end up in trouble when they chase their pets out onto the ice. It's very easy to become victim when trying to be a hero.

"Especially when it's raining like it is now, we can get shale ice," he said Tuesday. "That happens when there is a layer of water over top of ice and a layer of ice over top of the main water. People can fall through up to their ankles and then to their waist," he said.

If that happens the most important thing to do is stay calm. Try to stay as buoyant as possible and distribute your weight over the largest area possible. Pull yourself out, stay low to the ice and get to land then call 911.

Prevost said that's not an easy task when the wet ice is slippery. Your muscles contract and hypothermia sets in.

The best advice Flagg can give is to use the buddy system.

"If you're going for a walk take a buddy and try to stay together because the sooner somebody notices you're missing the better your chances are," he said.

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Twitter: @VixeyG



Prevost



Flagg



■ **EASTSIDE TRAIL:** 'What they're shutting down is a tourist attraction'

# Canal trail users met at the civic square

ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

**WELLAND** — The Eastside Trail is vital to Mike Racine's Darby Rd. business.

The owner of Horses Unlimited says he brings clients on 15 to 20 trail rides per week — many of them children — using the trails that run along the east side of the Welland Canal.

But since last fall when the City of Welland chose to end its lease agreement that was keeping the trail open to public users, Racine has been worried.

He urged people with the same concerns to attend public meetings to

discuss the future of the trail that took place. The two-hour meetings, organized by Upper Canada Equestrian Association, will be held in the Community Room at 2 p.m. and 5 p.m.

Racine said his clients might be able to ride their horses along Darby Rd. as an alternative to the trails, but vehicles speed along that road, making it unsafe for horses.

Racine said Horses Unlimited works with children with disabilities, providing therapy riding for them.

"These kids cannot be on the road like that," he added.

"What they're shutting

down is a tourist attraction, the only decent tourist attraction to see the Welland Canal," he said.

"Besides the Short Hills, this is the last refuge that we have for anywhere to ride around here."

Although one reason the city ended its lease for the property was because of noise and disruption caused by motorcycles and ATVs in the area, Racine said he's had a great deal of co-operation from the riders of those vehicles.

"I'm out there three times a day with eight or nine horses sometimes," he said.

"They always stop and shut their bikes off."

■ **JERICHO HOUSE:** Wainfleet makes rare move for safety of conference attendees

# Township uses sander on private property

DAVE JOHNSON  
Tribune Staff

**WAINFLEET** — A township vehicle used to sand the private parking lot of Jericho House last Friday was a one-time thing, says Wainfleet's chief administrative officer.

The municipality rented Jericho House last week to host a wind turbine conference for municipal representatives from across Ontario.

Township CAO Scott Luey said when he and township staff arrived for the conference they found the lot

ice-covered and one driver having a hard time getting around in it.

"It was pretty bad. As host of the event we thought it was our obligation to make sure attendees were safe when driv-

ing through the lot," he said.

Mayor April Jeffs Monday agreed with Luey about the stone covered lot being very icy when everyone arrived in the morning. She also said the lot was sanded to ensure the icy surface was not a safety issue for anyone.

Luey said the township doesn't provide winter control services, like plowing, sanding and salting for private property.

"This was a one-time event. We didn't know how bad it was until we got there."

He said if there had been time, the township would have asked Jericho House to hire a private contractor to do that lot.

Any future rental agreements at Jericho House or other locations, Luey said,

will include a clause about clearing parking lots of snow and ice.

If someone were to fall on the ice, not only could Jericho House be held liable, but a cross claim could be made against the township and that could be very costly, the CAO added.

Jericho House's Brother Bill Carrothers wasn't aware the lot was so icy on Friday.

"With the weather conditions, we thought it would all be melted," he said.

The lot, he said, obviously refroze, but the sidewalks and main entrance to the parking lot were cleared. The lot is regularly plowed, said Carrothers, but because it is stone-covered, the contractor must be careful not to damage the surface.

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## ■ FACILITIES

# Shed for new Vale centre costing in excess of \$38,000

MARYANNE FIRTH  
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — Vale Health and Wellness Centre will soon have an exterior

storage building.

Council awarded a contract to King Contractors of Niagara for construction of a six-by-seven-metre stor-

age building to house maintenance and snow-clearing equipment for the centre. Council budgeted \$38,500 for the building in 2012.

Though King Contractors offered the lowest bid, the approval did not come without question.

Ward 1 Coun. Dave Elliott

had concerns the company's price, which was recommended by staff for approval, was significantly lower than those of four other bids submitted.

Four of the bids were within 2% to 3% of each other, ranging from \$56,000 to \$61,585, while the fifth sat about 33% lower at \$38,640, he said.



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■ **HEALTH:** Brock University professor hopes to save lives with web tool that fights lung cancer

# Predicting cancer with a spreadsheet

GRANT LAFLECHE  
QMI Agency Niagara

**ST. CATHARINES** — Sometimes, it pays to know how to use a spreadsheet. Especially when it can save lives.

That is exactly why Brock University researcher Martin Tammemagi has created a tool that uses a simple spreadsheet to calculate a person's risk of developing lung cancer.

The epidemiologist said his creation, recently featured in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, could help improve lung cancer detection by as much as 40%.

"This is something that can save lives, which is what it is all about," he said.

Tammemagi began to

develop his calculator after being part of a multi-year cancer study in the United States, which he joined in 1998.

Doctors have had some success in early lung cancer detection using computed tomography, although it is not common in Canada. Tomography displays a cross-section through a human body or other solid object using X-rays or ultrasound.

The criteria for who qualifies for scanning is fairly limited, including only people who were fairly heavy smokers and had not quit smoking in the past 15 years.

Tammemagi included 11 criteria, including family and medical history, body mass index, age, race and education level, along with information about smoking habits.



Submitted photo

**Brock University researcher Martin Tammemagi has invented a new tool he hopes will help make it easier to detect lung cancer more quickly.**

The calculator then predicts the chances of that person developing lung cancer in the next six years.

Some of the criteria might

not seem obviously relevant, like education levels. However, Tammemagi said lower education levels impact employment which in turn impacts lifestyles that can be

directly connected to a risk of cancer.

Tammemagi tested his invention by following patients who were part of the American cancer study and found it had a high rate of success.

He said the results of the calculator might encourage people to stop smoking or even lead to a lung cancer screening.

In Niagara, the incidence of lung cancer is similar to the rest of the province, with about 85 people out of 100,000 being diagnosed each year, according to Cancer Care Ontario numbers.

The only question is what result will trigger a screening, Tammemagi said.

If the threshold is too low, then too many people will get

screened and that can dilute already limited health-care funding. If it is set too high, cancers might be missed. Ontario doesn't have guidelines for the screenings.

"That is not something I would determine," he said. "That is something that will be decided at the public health level and by society."

Although the tool is available for public use on the Brock website, Tammemagi said it is aimed at doctors more than the average person.

"Anyone can use it, but you run into problems when it creates a number but you don't really know what it means," he said.

It can be found online at [www.brocku.ca/lung-cancer-risk-calculator](http://www.brocku.ca/lung-cancer-risk-calculator).

■ **GOVERNMENT:** Poll finds residents don't always grasp regional services

# Niagara Region gets the money-wise message

JEFF BOLICHOWSKI  
QMI Agency Niagara

**THOROLD** — Residents may not know what Niagara Region does, but they're keenly watching their dollars.

That was their response when the region polled residents on topics from quality of life to how they receive news of the region's activities. Staff discovered residents care the least about being told what services the region does, and care most about knowing how their taxes are used.

And though residents feel

satisfied they know about what the region does, many still attribute regional services to the province or the local municipality — and sometimes the other way around.

"I don't know if it was surprising, but it was certainly interesting," said spokesman Darrell Neufeld, who spearheaded the survey project.

"They want assurances that their tax dollars are being spent effectively and wisely and they want to know what they're getting for their money."

That, he said, could mean a shift in the region's mes-

saging away from explanatory material. It released a \$3,000 video a few months ago explaining what the region does.

"They're not as concerned about who does what, so long as the service is there when they need it," Neufeld said.

The survey of 1,200 Niagarans, conducted by polling company Pollara, found 67% of residents want the region to tell them how their dollars are being spent, higher than any other option. Being informed about services ranked dead last, with 39% support.

Residents were just 41%

satisfied at how informed they were about how their tax dollars are spent. Another 52% were unsatisfied, including 24% very dissatisfied.

Job creation was ranked as residents' top priority everywhere, but St. Lincoln, where promoting public health won out. But 62% of residents were unhappy with the region's record on the issue, including 31% very unhappy.

One in three people could not name a service provided by the region but many were aware it handles recycling, garbage, roads,

sewers, water and funding for Niagara Regional Police. At least one in five attributed property assessment, hospitals and house building permits incorrectly to the region.

Neufeld said the survey cost \$37,000 and was completed in November. It's supplemented by the region's own online surveying.

The survey should have asked residents if they feel they're getting value for their dollar, said St. Catharines Coun. Andy Petrowski. He said he was surprised people are still confused about who deliv-

ers what service, though.

But he said what taxpayers see is rising regional costs.

"It just reminds them of how much it costs for this upper tier of government," he said. "It's not worth \$37,000 to find out what we already knew."

Neufeld said the survey found the region also got good marks for promoting public health. It also found 53% of Niagarans get their information about the region from the newspaper, though more young people are seeking information online.

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Lorna Vanderhaeghe is a women's health expert who has been researching nutritional medicine for over 30 years. With degrees in nutrition and biochemistry, Lorna is the author if 11 books including her newest, *A Smart Woman's Guide to Hormones* and *A Smart Woman's Guide to Weight Loss*. She has a monthly newsletter which you can read on her website - [www.hormonehelp.com](http://www.hormonehelp.com)



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